DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 081 025 CS 500 374

AUTHOR	Kernan, Margot
TITLE	The Politics of Revolution; A Film Course Study Guide.
INSTITUTION	Grove Press Film Div., New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE	[73]
NOTE	32p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Grove Press Film Division, 53 East 11 Street, New York, N. Y. 10003 (Free)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Aesthetic Education; Audiovisual Communication; Colleges; Color Presentation; Film Production; Film Production Specialists; Films; *Film Study; Foreign Language Films; High Schools; *Mass Media; Political Socialization; Politics; Repetitive Film Showings; *Revolution; Sound Films; *Visual Literacy
IDENTIFIERS	Cinema Study; Film Aesthetics; *Film Auteurism

ABSTRACT

This study guide for high school and college students examines selected, revolutionary political films made by Godard, Rocha, Solanas, Sanjines, and others, notably Czech and Cuban film-makers. This guide stresses an aesthetic, auteuristic approach and touches upon film production procedures. The films recommended for study range in technique from simple to complex and include sound and silent, black and white, and color modes, but all deal in some way with revolutionary politics. The political content is examined in relationship to the aesthetic form. (CH)

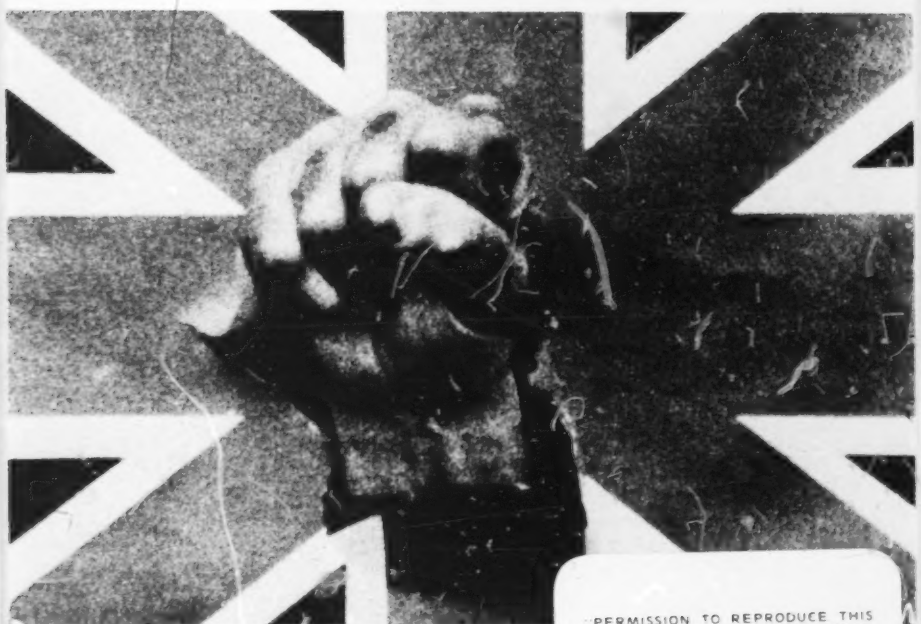
FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

ED 081025

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

A Film Course Study Guide

THE POLITICS OF REVOLUTION



Grove Press Films

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL BY MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Grove Press Film Division
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

CS 500 374

Contents

Introduction / 3
Godard's "Dziga Vertog Group" Political Films / 5
Antonio Das Mortes / 11
The Hour of The Furnaces / 14
Blood of the Condor / 16
The Joke / 18
Inside North Vietnam / 20
Interviews with Mylai Veterans / 21
Cuban Revolutionary Cinema / 23
How Film Began: A Brief Chronology / 26
Suggested Reading / 28
Other Film Study Guides / 30

Cover photo: *See You at Mao*

Introduction

"Comrades and friends, today I am going to speak to you about Current Events.

We know all about Current Events. You see them every day in the movies."

Jean-Luc Godard. *La Chinoise.*

Developing a new aesthetic has become the theoretical and practical concern of radical film-makers. Brazilian director Glauber Rocha has said that "a political revolution is nothing without a cultural revolution . . . the two are inseparable because the society's present mode of living is under the oppression of information."

In studying films that deal with the politics of revolution, it is important, therefore, to investigate how effectively the cinema form advances the cultural revolution. Fernando Solanas, co-director of *The Hour of The Furnaces,* says that virtuoso film techniques are not enough, that a new aesthetic must come from "placing oneself in the realm of the ugly" in opposition to consumer-oriented ideas of beauty. Godard's political films seek to use "the screen as a blackboard," and to combine images and words in intellectual, rather than emotional, terms. Glauber Rocha and Jorge Sanjines, each in different ways, use the language of folk tradition to involve the people in both the act and the subject of the film. All of these directors, in varying degrees, are setting up collective methods of work, rather than using traditional hierarchical models where the director reigns supreme.

As a starting point, these questions can be asked of any work that appears to be a revolutionary political film. Does it show the strength and struggle of the people, or does it merely dwell on the power of the oppressor? Does it challenge or destroy the myth of the Hollywood superhero? Does it provide a concrete view of new political and social structures, or does it offer magical nihilist solutions? Does it invite the intelligent participation of the audience by providing realistic role models and intellectual content? Does it give an honest picture of a culture, or is it aloof, condescending, or romantic?

In looking at different forms of revolutionary cinema, three points of departure have been used in this course outline. First, to examine how Third World and socialist cultures show us their conflicts—as in *Antonio Das Mortes, The Hour of the Furnaces, The Joke,* the Cuban films, and *Blood of the Condor;* second, to see how Marxist thought is conveyed in cinematic form as in the films of Godard; and third, to look at the reports of sympathetic Western observers as Felix Greene's *Inside North Vietnam,* and Brian Moser's *End of a Revolution.*

In film, both culture and politics meet, and for that reason this course outline can be used for either film study or political science programs. The course outline is divided into seven sections, based on individual films or groups of films that represent the three approaches outlined above. The sections can be intermixed, or serve as the basis for an in depth study. Most of the bibliographic references are for film study, but it is important to also bring in sources from politics and economics to determine how these forces determine cultural forms.

Jean-Luc Godard

Godard's "Dziga Vertov* Group" Political Films:

SEE YOU AT MAO, WIND FROM THE EAST, PRAVDA, VLADIMIR AND ROSA

"To break with the Hollywood system," says a voice in *See You at Mao,* "involves a radical change of aesthetics." Ever since his film *Weekend,* which ended with the words: "End of film—end of cinema," Godard has been obsessed with the process of radically reordering the connections between image and sound in order to destroy Hollywood forms and create instead a cinema that offers "a concrete analysis of a specific situation."

This process of building an analytic cinema is fraught with hazards. Godard's complex political films have been called boring, demented, and futile; and they demand rigorous concentration and strong intellectual curiosity. "We must return to zero," says Patricia Lumumba, one of the two characters in Godard's dialectical game film, *Le Gai Savoir.* And this act of returning to zero means disordering traditional relationships: "words must be broken" and films must show "the struggle between image and sound."

Godard takes Marxist dialectics as a jumping-off point in this reconstruction process. "Don't say nature, say dialectic of nature," says a soundtrack voice quoting Engels at the end of *Pravda.* Dialectic, building a concept out of two contradictory ideas, forms the structure of these political films. This dialectic can be set up between image and image (as in *Wind From the East*), between image and sound (as in *See You at Mao*), or sound and sound (as in *Pravda*). In the space where the conflicting elements

*Dziga Vertov, Soviet director (1896-1954) who started as a newsreel cameraman right after the October Revolution. In 1919, wrote his first Manifesto, "Toward a Non-Playful Cinema," and subsequently developed his doctrine of "Kino-eye," the camera which does not merely observe, but becomes the active protagonist of the film. Directed features, including *The Eleventh Year* (1928), *The Man with the Movie Camera, Three Songs of Lenin* (1934), and others. Godard says that Vertov "was the only one who clearly stated that the workers of the movie industry must show the world in terms of the world-wide proletarian revolution." Jean Pierre Gorin has been Godard's collaborator in the "Dziga Vertov Group."

meet, a new concept is formed. From combinations available in the editing process, Godard creates synthesis out of opposition by constructing one-shot collage images combining words and pictures, and by contrasting spoken words or sounds with photographed scenes.

See You at Mao (British Sounds), 1968
Produced in England by the Dziga Vertov Group
for British television (ITV), but never shown.
52 minutes, color. Rental $75. Sale $6.50
Distributed by Grove Press Films.

"Photography," says a voice in *See You at Mao,* "is not the reflection of reality, it is the reality of that reflection." This film, then, is a series of photographic and verbal reflections on the contradictions between workers and radical students in England.

The opening sequence is a long traveling shot of an

assembly line where British workers are making cars while a voice reads Marx on the soundtrack. The other "British sounds" we hear are a little girl's voice reciting important dates in workers' history, and the whine of the factory machines. Then follows a scene of a naked young woman, while a voice talks about Freudian politics and Marxist sexuality; then a rabidly racist television commentator fulminates against workers; then a workers' conference where the speaker is resolutely kept off-camera; and finally, a group of students rewriting pop songs with Maoist lyrics. The film ends with a hand (Godard's) struggling to reach a red flag lying on the ground, as it had begun with angry fists punching through a paper Union Jack ("film must be involved with the destruction of signs").

The dialectic of the film works in two apparent ways. In the opening shot, the assembly line on the screen, the factory noise, and the voices reading present a three or even four-level analysis of the concrete situation of British workers' lives. Later, Godard cuts from scenes of workers at their job to the racist television commentator mouthing an anti-worker speech to shots of real workers discussing their work—a three-part analysis, but in sequential rather than single shot form.

Wind from the East (1969)
Produced in Italy by the Dziga Vertov Group with Daniel Cohn-Bendit. Color, 90 minutes.
Cast: Anne Wiazemsky, Gian-Maria Volonte.
Distributed by New Line Cinema,
121 University Place, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Godard has called this film "an ideological Western," and through its form he extends his analysis to show how mass media, especially movies, reinforces repressive thought and behavior. Made in Italy with financial backing from commercial producers, this could be called Godard's answer to Sergio Leone, even using a popular male film star (Gian-Maria Volonte) to help subvert the spaghetti Western aesthetic.

In *See You at Mao,* the television commentator actually spoke the racist distortions that Godard feels are tacitly communicated by all capitalist mass media. In *Wind from the East,* the film sets up a dialectic out

of mass media typology—the characters are the whore, the cavalry officer, the Indian—to illustrate how this typology supports the economics of imperialism. Glauber Rocha also appears briefly to advocate a Third World cinema.

The film uses the same austere format that marks the other three films: voice-over narration with little synch dialogue, long shots of almost motionless people or closeups of impassive faces, and use of obviously artificial and "theatrical" techniques (red paint blood, grotesque makeup) to distance the film from any emotionality.

Pravda (1969)
Produced in Czechoslovakia by the Dziga Vertov Group. Color, 60 minutes. Rental $75.
Sale $600. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

In *Pravda* (which means truth and is also the name of the Soviet party newspaper), Godard establishes a stringent dialectic between image and sound to present a critical picture of contemporary Czechoslovakia. On the soundtrack, conversations between a man (Vladimir Lenin) and a woman (Rosa Luxemburg) are interspersed with amplified rock music, factory noises, an interview in French with Vera Chytilova (director of *Something Different* and *Daisies*), the gurgling of red wine (Godard's comment on the radicalism of Czechoslovakia) into a glass; and even the song "A Man and a Woman," Godard's little joke about the relevance of Vladimir and Rosa to contemporary Czechoslovakians.

So you have the contradictions between the voices of pure doctrine—Lenin and Luxemburg*—interspersed with conflicting sounds: rock music, French conversation, and also contrasted with the pop neon images of 1968 Czechoslovakia: Coca-Cola ads, television with "the same lying woman" on camera, the "Fly OK" airlines slogans. The camera shows us the materials, the soundtrack the noises, that supply proof for the charges of revisionism that Vladimir and Rosa are making.

*Rosa Luxemburg, 1870-1919, political activist born in Russian Poland, participant in the 1905 Russian revolution; and with William Liebknecht, a leader of the Marxist German Spartacus Party. After the Spartacist uprising in 1919, they were both arrested and killed by soldiers in Berlin.

Vladimir and Rosa (1970)
Produced by the Dziga Vertov Group. Color, 106 minutes. *Cast:* Anne Wiazemsky, Juliette Berto, Jean-Luc Godard, Jean Pierre Gorin, Claude Nedjar. Rental $125. Sale, apply. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

Vladimir and Rosa is a recap of the Chicago 8 trial, with a cast of French militants replacing the American characters. Godard states two reasons for making the film: one is "to correct the links between theory and practice," the other is to make money to pay for *Til Victory,* a film about the struggle in Palestine.

The film is looser and has more jokes than the other three. the title appears written in the engine of a broken-down red car, actual black leader is often substituted for pictures of the militant "Bobby X"; Godard, dressed as a policeman, says he will show us his nightstick, and unzips his pants; and a still of the Marx Brothers making grotesque faces illustrates a serious dictum about film interpretation. Godard constructs a dialogue between "Friedrich Vladimir" and "Karl Rosa," actually played by Jean Pierre Gorin (The other half of the "Dziga Vertov Group") and Godard himself, somewhat in the manner of film critics Comolli and Fieschi playing "Heckle and

Vladimir and Rosa

Jeckle" in *Alphaville*.

Godard seems to be using the situation of the trial as a focal point to examine the facts of class struggle in France, but the framework of the analysis keeps changing. Though the film presents Marxist ideas, in practice it is based on visual and intellectual data imported from the capitalist U.S.A.—the Women's Liberation Front, the Black Panther, the Weathergirl, and even the "videofreek" approach to media. The dialectic, therefore, becomes cloudy; perhaps because the analysis of the contradictions is never rooted in a specific situation, but keeps slipping off into fantasy (the trial recreation) or abstraction (the Godard-Gorin tennis court debate).

About the Director:

Jean-Luc Godard was born in Paris, December 3, 1930, of middle-class Swiss, Calvinist ancestry. In 1949, he received a Certificate d'Ethnologie from the Sorbonne, and in 1950, published his first articles in *Cahiers du Cinema*.

In 1954, he worked as a laborer on the construction of the Grande-Dixence dam in Switzerland and made his first short film, *Operation Beton*, there. Also wrote for *Cahiers* under the pseudonym Hans Lucas, and made short films: *Une Femme Coquette* (1955), *Tous les Garcons S'Appellent Patrick* (1957), *Charlotte et Son Jules, L'Histoire d'Eau* (1958).

His first feature film, *Breathless*, was made in 1959, and since then he has completed *Le Petit Soldat* (1960), *A Woman is a Woman* (1961), *Vivre Sa Vie* (1962), *Les Carabiniers* (1963), *Contempt* (1963), *Band of Outsiders* (1964), *A Married Woman* (1964), *Alphaville* (1965), *Pierrot le Fou* (1965), *Masculine-Feminine* (1966), *Made in U.S.A.* (1966), *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (1966), *La Chinoise* (1967), *Weekend* (1967), *Le Gai Savoir* (1968), *Sympathy for the Devil* (One Plus One), (1968), and the Dziga Vertov Group films. His latest feature, *Everything is Wonderful* (1972) stars Jane Fonda and Yves Montand. Grove Press also distributes *Weekend*.

For a complete listing of Godard's film projects, see Michael Goodwin's and Greil Marcus' *Double Feature*. New York: Outerbridge & Lazard, Inc., 1972.

Antonio Das Mortes

On a flat dusty plain dotted with little bushes, a lone man is staggering about, dying. With this image, and the sound of a gunshot and a scream, we are introduced to Antonio Das Mortes, bandit killer in long black coat and trailing purple scarf, who stalks the landscape of the Brazilian *sertao* as executioner for the rich landlords.

Brazilian director Glauber Rocha has defined revolution as "an instrument of cultural as well as political resistance." With this film, as with his others, he seeks to destroy the cultural colonialism of Hollywood and Europe, and make films rooted in the art and traditions of the Brazilian people. To Rocha, the most important thing is the language which transmits the message; and the language of *Antonio Das Mortes* combines popular religion, myth, and music—not to create a cultural object, but to enlist the processes of popular art in the service of revolution.

This film, in brilliant Eastmancolor and pulsating with the music of Marlos Nobre, one of Brazil's leading composers of electronic music, tells the story of the transformation of hired killer into political avenger. Antonio, whom we first saw firing off his guns and jump-cutting around the horizon in Rocha's *Black God, White Devil,* has been engaged by the Colonel, a blind landowner who controls the police, schools, and clergy, to eliminate the last of the *cangaceiros* (wandering bandits who protect the poor). In a ritual duel in the village square, Antonio stabs the *cangaceiro*. The dying man is carried to the mountainside by a procession of sorrowing and dancing religious celebrants led by a black saint on a white horse.

Antonio's act triggers a chain of deaths. First the police chief is stabbed by the Colonel's whore-mistress—red blood sopping onto her purple chiffon gown—and Antonio shoots down a masque-like crowd of protestors. The Colonel's priest and the school teacher move to the side of the people's black saint; Antonio suddenly changes sides and guns down the Colonel's bodyguards, leaving the black leader free to impale the lizard-like Colonel on his long spear. The decision to join the people has freed Antonio—in the

words of the folksong, "he has risen from the dust."

In *Black God, White Devil,* characters were shown in terms of their economic roles—Antonio shooting his gun, Manuel and his wife grinding their corn—but in *Antonio Das Mortes,* social and personal acts move back and forth between ritual and fact. The dialectic is established within the shot itself, like the fight between Antonio and the *cangaceiro* which pits Antonio's real sword against the costume tin sword of the *cangaceiro*; or the scene, shot in one long take, where priest, teacher, and whore grapple and embrace over the bloody corpse of the police chief—a one-shot image combining sex, violence, and art.

Though Antonio's gun has paved the way, the actual execution of the Colonel is accomplished by the black St. George, called Oxosse, of the people's religion (the Portuguese title of the film is *O Santo Guerreiro Contra O Dragao Da Maldade,* or "the holy warrior against the evil dragon"), and the execution is shot in repetitive, strobe-like images. The film alternates scenes of furious activity—singing, dancing, gunbattles shot with hand-held cameras (Rocha says that Mauricio do Valle, who played Antonio, insisted on using real bullets)—with passages of hieratic calm, where long processions move against infinite landscapes; or brilliantly painted doorways frame human figures with the solemnity of a holy image.

About the Director

Glauber Rocha was born in Bahia, Brazil, in 1938; and turned to film-making after studying law. He also worked as an actor and director in Brazilian theatre, and as a journalist. In 1961, he wrote an essay which became the manifesto for the Brazilian "Cinema Novo" movement, led by Nelson Pereira Dos Santos *(Vidas Secas),* Ruy Guerra *(Oz Fuziz)*, and Rocha, to move Brazilian cinema away from the "colonizing" influence of Hollywood and Europe into an indigenous national style. Rocha's short films are: *O Patio* (1959), *A Cruz Na Praca* (1960), *Amazonas* (1965), *Maranhao '66* (1966); and features: *Barravento* (1962), *Black God, White Devil* (1963), *Terra em Transe* (Earth Entranced, 1966), and *Antonio Das Mortes* (1969), which won the best director award at the 1969 Cannes Film Festival, the Prix Luis Bunuel, and the Prix de l'Association Internationale des

Antonio Das Mortes

Cinemas d'Art et Essai.

Rocha has been in exile since 1969. His most recent films are *Der Leone Have Sept Cabezas,* made in the Congo in 1970, and *Cabezas Cortadas,* made in Spain the same year. He also appears briefly in Godard's *Wind from the East.*

Credits: Antonio Das Mortes (1969)
Director: Glauber Rocha. *Writer:* Rocha. *Producer:* Claude-Antoine, MAPA Films, Rocha. *Photographer:* Alfonso Beato. *Music:* Marlos Nobre. *Editor:* Eduardo Escorel. *Cast:* Mauricio do Valle, Odete Lara, Othon Bastos, Hugo Carvana, Jofre Soares, Lorival Pariz, Rosa Maria Penna, and the people of Milagres. 100 minutes, Eastmancolor. Portuguese with English subtitles. Rental $125. Sale $950. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

The Hour of The Furnaces

"Mass communications are more deadly than napalm," says a title that flashes on the screen during *The Hour of the Furnaces,* Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino's remarkable four hour film about the revolutionary struggle in Argentina. The film is remarkable not just for the power of its images, but for its impassioned analysis of an entire society. Solanas and Getino have made a new form, the "ideological essay" film, to replace traditional ways of expressing radical ideas.

"The problem of form," says Fernando Solanas, "is absolutely inseparable from that of content. Make a film on a strike (or if you absolutely insist, on the impossibility of loving one another in a capitalist society), logically if you don't destroy the old notions of beauty on which all bourgeois art rests, your film ends up as another case of alienated expression, completely short circuited, tamed like a wild animal kept in a cage. The cage, the chain around your neck—it's nothing other than 'beautiful expression.' "

There is nothing tame about *The Hour of the Furnaces.* Solanas and Getino have worked collectively to make a film based on the history and politics of Argentina. Not content with simply juxtaposing pictures of rich landowners and poor peasants, they take the time to explore the causes of these contradictions, giving concrete facts about history, culture, economics, health problems, education, labor unions, and left wing political movements.

It is brilliant cinema, using multi-track superimposed sound, jump cuts, collage, documentary reportage, wild music, and a whole range of movie techniques to batter at the very foundations of Argentine society. Solanas and Getino, who worked making commercials to finance production of *The Hour of the Furnaces,* know how to use image-sound combinations that are elementally persuasive.

The film is divided into three major sections: "Notes on Neo-Colonialism"; "Act for the Revolution: Chronicle of Peronism and The Resistance"; and "Violence and Liberation." The first part opens in blackness. Words by Fanon, Guevara, and Sartre burn out from the screen. Then torches flash in the night, a

running figure hurtles by, more blackness, the sudden burst of a spotlight, a policeman bends over a struggling figure, blackness, a staccato drumbeat hastens the action, and music—a distorted pop tune—surges to the rise and fall of the torchlights. Then, after a detailed analysis of the history and causes of Argentine underdevelopment, the first section ends with a closeup of the dead face of Che Guevara, held for five long minutes. Somehow the device makes us feel that even in death, Guevara looks more alive than the dull-eyed bureaucrats and landowners we had seen actually moving and speaking in the early part of the film.

In spite of its length, the film should be seen in its entirety (though the first part is available for separate rental); and preferably all at one time, with breaks for discussion. In Argentina, it was designed to be shown with pauses to give the audience a chance to talk over the issues raised, and there are even titles in the film which say "Space for Speaker." Solanas and Getino believe that a radical film must involve its audience as participants, not spectators, and that they must complete the act of liberation that the film initiates, in terms of their own culture and needs. "The liberation of each country," says the film, "is always something new"; and this liberation of the motion picture form by Solanas and Getino provides a new model for radical practice.

The Hour of the Furnaces was produced in 1968 by Fernando E. Solanas and Octavio Getino and the Grupo Cine Liberacion in Argentina. It runs for 260 minutes in its complete form; in black and white with Spanish dialogue and English subtitles. Distributed by Third World Tri-Continental Films, 244 West 27th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.

Solanas and Getino call themselves authors, rather than directors. Fernando E. Solanas was born in Buenos Aires in 1936. He studied law, theatre, and music, and made his first short film *Seguir Andando* (To Keep Going) in 1962, and has since made many short publicity films. Octavio Getino was born in Spain in 1935, and has lived in Argentina since 1952. As a writer, one of his books of stories was awarded a *Casa de las Americas* prize.

Blood of The Condor

In a Quechua village high up in the Bolivian Andes, Indian men meet together to talk of divination, and the women gather goods for the weekly trip to market day in town. This peaceful existence is shattered when a Peace Corps hospital unit moves into the village.

With this film, Jorge Sanjines has created a work that is rooted in the Quechua Indian culture and one that conveys the Indian sense of time and place in the very structure of the film itself. Sanjines has said that true revolutionary cinema must search for "another language" capable of involving the spectator by capturing his inner rhythms, mental structures, and cultural characteristics. As Sanjines tells the story of Ignacio and his wife, an Indian couple whose lives are destroyed by the long arm of United States intervention, he uses parallel cutting which fuses past and future to create a language where only the present exists.

To the Indians the Peace Corps volunteers are bizarre intruders, handing out American clothes to the mountain villagers. And since the *gringo* doctors have come, something strange has happened to the Indian women who go to their hospital—they don't conceive any more. Furthermore, a police raid rounds up the Indian men who have marched on the hospital in protest and kills them all, except for the severely wounded Ignacio, who is brought by his wife to the city for treatment.

As Ignacio's wife and brother go from place to place to look for medical help—a Mestizo doctor's house with plenty of smiling children; a medical luncheon—we see what deep cultural conflicts lie between Mestizo and Indian: the silent impassive faces of the two Indians contrasted with the voluble grimacing city crowds. Ignacio dies in the city, but his brother returns to Indian life in the village, and as the film ends, their rifles are raised in a call to armed struggle.

About the Director:
Jorge Sanjines was ousted from the directorship of the Bolivian Film Institute because his first film, *Ukamau*, which also dealt with the Indian culture,

was considered "too negative." *Blood of the Condor* was initially banned in Bolivia, but the public outcry was so great that the authorities finally allowed it to be shown. Since its opening, more than 320,000 Bolivians have seen the film—the biggest box-office success in Bolivia's history.

Sanjines made his first two films about Indian life because he feels that Bolivian culture should speak to this group which represents over 65 percent of the population. *Blood of the Condor* was filmed in the Quechua Indian dialect, and later dubbed into Spanish for metropolitan audiences. Sanjines himself took the film out into rural Indian communities where it might not normally have been seen. He feels that *Blood of the Condor* was influential in getting the Peace Corps expelled from Bolivia during the progressive Torres regime.

Jorge Sanjines has been in exile since the Torres regime was ousted in 1971. His newest film, *The Courage of the People,* was financed by RAI, the Italian television network, and deals with the massacre of Bolivian tin miners by government troops on the Feast Day of St. John in 1967.

Credits: Blood of the Condor (1969)
Director: Jorge Sanjines. *Script:* Oscar Soria, Jorge Sanjines. *Photography:* Antonio Egnino *Producer:* Ricardo Rada. *Music:* Alberto Vilalpando, Alfredo Dominguez, Gregorio Yana, Ignacio Quispe. *Cast:* Marcelino Yanahuaya, Benedicta Mendoza Huanca, Vicente Salinas, Mario Arrieta, Felipe Vargas, Carlos Cervantes, Ilde Artes, Jose Arce, Adela Penaranda, Luis Ergueta, Danielle Caillet, Humberto Vera, Javier Fernandez, Julio Quispe, and the people of the Kaata rural community. 95 minutes, black and white. Spanish dialogue, English subtitles. Distributed by Third World Tri-Continental Films, 244 West 27th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.

The Joke

A mechanical rooster crows rustily and flaps its metal wings at the beginning of Jaromil Jires' *The Joke,* a film which offers a highly critical view of the mechanical and rigid early days of Czech communism.

Louis, a scientist, returns to his small hometown near Prague and there begins to enact a revenge that had obsessed him ever since the '50s when he had been expelled from his University by Party functionaries for writing a Trotskyite joke—"optimism is the opiate of the people"—on a postcard to his girlfriend. His expulsion leads him to service in an Army punishment brigade, a term in prison, and two years in the mines.

In the town he meets Helen, wife of one of the officials who had forced his removal, and he resolves to seduce her as an act of revenge on her husband. But when he does, she reveals that she hasn't lived with her husband for three years and is desperately looking for a new lover. The husband, Paul, appears in the town to attend a folk festival, and he and his

young girlfriend treat Louis and Helen with condescending toleration. An abortive suicide attempt by Helen, and the beating of Helen's young assistant who is bent on revenging himself on Louis, completes the circle of blocked causality that the film establishes.

Technically, the film is a beautiful piece of traditional film craftsmanship, with the cinematography of Jan Curik adding richness and style. Small scenes are carefully realized—the "christening" of new babies by the mayor of the town, musicians playing and young children looking around bored as an historic letter from a Gestapo prisoner is read. The mixing of past and present—flashbacks of Louis' life in the punishment brigade intercut with scenes of him wandering through the empty streets of the little town—strengthens the mood of irony and obsession. Both in its form and content, the film offers a liberal-humanist critique of rigid Party ideology, and raises valuable questions for discussion, especially in comparison with other films from Marxist cultures.

About the Director:
Jaromil Jires was born in Bratislava in 1935, and studied cinematography and directing at the Industrial Film School and the Prague Film Faculty. His first film, *The Hall of Lost Footsteps* (1958), won a prize in the short subjects competition at the San Sebastian Film Festival, and his first feature, *The Cry* (1964), won special Honorable Mention at the Cannes Film Festival. In 1965, he was one of five Czech directors participating in the omnibus film, *Pearls on the Ground,* and he also collaborated with Pavel Juracek on *Every Young Man* (1965), a two-part film about Czech Army life.

Credits: The Joke (1969)
Director: Jaromil Jires. *Producer:* Barrandov Film Studio. *Script:* Jires and Milan Kundera from the novel by Kundera. *Photography:* Jan Curik. *Music:* Zdenek Pololanik. *Cast:* Josef Somr, Jana Ditetova, Ludek Munzar, Evald Schorm, Vera Kresadlova, Jaromir Hanzlik, Mical Pavlata. 80 minutes, black and white. Czech dialogue with English subtitles. Winner of the International Critics Award at the 1969 New Delhi International Film Festival. Rental $125. Sale $750. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

Inside North Vietnam

"It is our history to win," the North Vietnamese prime minister says to producer-director Felix Greene. "We fought the Chinese for a thousand years, the French for 80 years, and now the Americans. It may take us ten, twenty, or many more years to retain our independence."

Greene is an English film-maker who went to North Vietnam on assignment from the *San Francisco Chronicle,* and his film reinforces the Prime Minister's statement. Shot after shot reveals the determination of the North Vietnamese people—youth brigades rebuilding roads and bridges, farmers fighting with rifles against American jets, and teachers tending children in tiny hamlets and villages where even the smallest child learns to become self-sufficient by feeding and caring for himself.

The film, made in 1967, combines interviews and documentary footage shot by Greene himself with Japanese newsreel film of the bombings. Even at that time, Greene tells us, the United States had dropped more bombs on North Vietnam than were used on

Inside North Vietnam

Nazi Germany during World War II. The sequences showing the devastation and suffering brought by the bombing are horrifying, especially as you realize that the doctors, teachers, and young people you see working in 1967 may not be alive today.

Greene also interviews a hospitalized American pilot who tells about the efficient care he has been receiving from North Vietnamese medical personnel, and, upon questioning by Green, also admits that he had been dropping CBU anti-personnel bombs—weapons banned by international law and the Nuremberg charter.

Visits to schools and hospitals also bring out concrete information about the progress made in education and public health since the overthrow of French colonial rule. Under the French only two children out of one hundred went to school, now education is universal. Infant mortality has gone from 30% under the French to 2.4%. The bombings, however, enact losses that go as high as 13,000 a month. "But when a people are ready to die," says Ho Chi Minh, "they can no longer be intimidated."

Credits: Inside North Vietnam (1967)
Directed, written, and produced by Felix Green. *Editor:* Gordon Mueller. 91 minutes, color. Rental $125. Sale, apply. Distributed by Grove Press Films. Other films by Felix Green: *China!* (1962), distributed by Grove Press Films, and *Cuba Va!*, distributed by Impact Films, 144 Bleecker St., New York, N.Y. 10012.

Interviews with Mylai Veterans

Five discharged soldiers who participated in the Mylai massacre talk about what they saw and did on March 16, 1968, when their company was given the order to destroy the Vietnamese village. This film, directed by Joseph Strick (*The Savage Eye, The Balcony, Ulysses, Tropic of Cancer*), and photographed by Haskell Wexler (*Medium Cool*) and Richard Pearce, simply shows the men answering questions by Richard Hammer (who is not seen on camera).

The ex-soldiers, five average American types, differ

Interviews with Mylai Veterans

in the degree of sensitivity that they display. But they all repeat the same terrible facts—"it just didn't faze me", "you don't ask questions unless you are an officer," "if you don't kill people, you'll be shot yourself," "you take orders and you act them out, however pointless," and "everyone seemed to be having a good time." We are told that the Vietnamese have "a funny understanding of life—they don't care if they live or die," and that "they would have died anyway." But in answer to the question, "What do you consider to be a war crime?", the one black man interviewed replies "Being over there in the first place."

This Academy Award winning film would be an important addition to any program dealing with the politics of revolution, and would be especially relevant used with *Inside North Vietnam,* since it brings the situation up to date and provides another perspective for study. *Interviews with Mylai Veterans* is a 20 minute color film, edited by Sylvia Sarner. Rental $25. Sale $225. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

Cuban Revolutionary Cinema

"Our work is not simply making and showing movies; everything we do is part of a global process towards developing the possibilities of participation—not passive but active, not as recipients but as protagonists of the public."

Alfredo Guevara, head of Cuba's state-run Cinema Institute (ICAIC), believes, as do Solanas and Getino (*The Hour of the Furnaces*), that true revolutionary cinema must be a *process* that involves the active collaboration of the audience. In Cuba, the Instituto Cubano de Artes y Industrias Cinematographica has been making short films and features since it was established, on March 24, 1959, by a law which began with the words "cinema is an art." The Institute has since been responsible for creating a popular cinema of revolutionary expression which has produced weekly newsreels and 44 feature films between 1960 and 1968.

Like Solanas and also Godard, Alfredo Guevara is concerned with breaking away from the bourgeois language of cinema. In Havana, for instance, a state-sponsored television program called "24 a Second" explains movie techniques in order to demystify them for popular audiences; to show, in Guevara's words, "all the tricks that the cinema, especially the commercial cinema, uses to strike at the sensitivity of the spectator."

Rather than being consumer products as were the Hollywood movies of pre-revolutionary times, films in Cuba are now used to express people's history and culture, and to serve as weapons and instruments of work. For instance, mobile cinema trucks go out into remote villages to bring educational and entertainment films to people who would not otherwise have a chance to see them.

Cuban features, most of which are not currently available in the United States due to Treasury Department restrictions, fall into no readily identifiable genre. Thomas Gitterez Alea made the wild farce, *Death of a Bureaucrat* (dedicated to Bunuel, Laurel and Hardy, and the Marx Brothers) in 1966; and *Memories of Underdevelopment*, a sympathetic study of a post-revolutionary dilettante, in 1969. Alea's other films are: *Historias de la Revolucion*

(1960), *La Doce Sillas* (1962), and *Cumbite* (1964).

Other important Cuban feature directors are Julio Carlos Espinosa, who made *El Joven Rebelde* in 1961 with a script by Zavattini, and *Las Aventuras de Juan Quin Quin* in 1967; Manuel Octavio Gomez, whose films include the shorts *Story of a Battle* and *School in the Countryside*, and features *La Salacion* (1965), *The First Charge of the Machete* (1969), and *Days of Water* (1971); and Humberto Solas: *Manuela* (1966), and *Lucia* (1968).

Perhaps the most outstanding of all, however, is the brilliant short film director, Santiago Alvarez, who heads the shorts and newsreels department at ICAIC. Alvarez, born in 1919, studied art, history and psychology in the United States. His work is known for its incisive political attack and stunning visual sophistication—combining graphics, collage, rock music, poetry, and complex cinema techniques. Alvarez is the dean of Cuban film makers, and his work is enormously popular in a culture where painters like Miro and Matta submit designs for cracker boxes, and even billboards are brilliant displays of graphic art.

A good library of Santiago Alvarez films is available through American Documentary Films, 336 West 84th St., New York, N.Y. 10001. One of the most interesting is *79 Springtimes* (25 minutes, black and white, produced in 1969).

This brilliantly edited tribute to the life of Ho Chi Minh begins with the image of a flower and the music of Country Joe and the Fish, and combines old footage of Ho (in a tent typing his own dispatches, as a student in Paris, as a political leader in China), with scenes of his funeral and of the war in Vietnam. The film techniques are dazzling—a long sequence showing the American troops in Vietnam uses deliberately cracked film stock that looks as though it would break into fragments on the screen because the projector couldn't contain the horror that it is showing. But because there is also sensitively shot footage of American protestors demonstrating against the war, the film has a positive feeling that rises above national propaganda.

Octavio Cortezar's *For the First Time* (12 minutes, black and white, 1966), also distributed by American Documentary Films, gives a touching account of a

cinema truck's visit to a remote village to bring movies to the people "for the first time." Townspeople are interviewed about what they think movies are like—"I want to see one for myself," says one woman," so no one can tell me what it is"—and as night falls, an open-air screening of *Modern Times* brings out nursing mothers, toothless old ladies, and round-eyed children who watch in wonder as Charlie Chaplin battles with technology. *For The First Time* is a beautiful evocation of an event, and a subtle affirmation of the power of film as cultural communication.

American Documentary Films also distributes *Manuela* by Solas, *Story of a Battle* by Gomez, and the Santiago Alvarez shorts: *Now!; Until Total Victory; Cerro Pelado; Hanoi Tuesday 13; Laos, the Forgotten War; Eleven to Zero; Takeoff at 18:00; The Stampede;* and *How and Why Was the General Murdered?*

Two other films also give related information about the Cuban revolution.

End of a Revolution (26 minutes, black and white, 1968) was produced by Brian Moser for Granada Television, Great Britain. Rental $50. Sale $200. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

This gripping, on-the-scenes report deals with the death of Che Guevara in Vallegrande, Bolivia, in 1968, and the subsequent military trial of his associate, Regis Debray, French intellectual and friend of Castro, who had been working with Guevara in the Bolivian guerrilla movement. Scenes showing the training of Bolivian counter-insurgency troops by U.S. Rangers and shots of the harrowing working conditions of the Bolivian tin miners make this a strong statement about the revolutionary struggle in Latin America. (This would also be a good film to use with *Blood of the Condor*).

Cuba: The State of the Revolution (30 minutes, color, 1968). Directed by Kerry Felthan for Monitor Films. Rental: $50. Sale: $350. Distributed by Grove Press Films.

A sketchy view of the Cuban scene, which nonetheless does give information about art in revolutionary Cuba and some interesting insights into the middle class reaction to the Castro takeover.

How Film Began: A Brief Chronology

Mid 19th Century: Motion toys, such as the praxinoscope and the phenakistoscope; and magic lanterns which projected glass plates.

California, 1878: E. Muybridge begins photographic studies of animal and human motion, with cameras arranged in multiple sequences.

Germany, 1887: Ottomar Anschutz invents the Electrotachyscope, a machine for projecting pictures mounted on a glass wheel.

France, 1887: E. J. Marey first uses roll paper film to record motion in his "Chronophotographic" camera.

Rochester, N.Y., 1888: George Eastman begins the manufacture of flexible clear nitrate film.

England, 1889: William Friese-Greene takes stereoscopic motion pictures.

West Orange, N.J., 1891: Thomas Alva Edison patents the Kinetoscope, W.K.L. Dickson's film-viewing machine.

West Orange, 1894: Edison copyrights *Fred Ott's Sneeze,* the first film made to demonstrate Edison and Dickson's kinetoscope.

Paris, 1895: Louis Lumiere gives the world's first showing of projected motion pictures, made with his Cinematograph, which could be used as camera, projector, and printer. The films shown were: *Employees Leaving the Lumiere Factory, The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station, Baby's Lunch, Watering the Gardener,* and *Boat Leaving the Harbor.*

London, 1896: R. W. Paul's Theatrograph, a seven-toothed star wheel intermittent projector used at Finsbury Technical College.

West Orange, 1896: First film made by Edison for projection—*John Rice and May Irwin Kiss,* 50 feet long.

Paris, 1896: Pathe Freres cinema production and distribution company founded.

Paris, 1897: Georges Melies, French magician and film-maker, builds first glassed-in film studio at Montreuil Sous Bois to produce trick, fantasy, and faked news films (reconstructed actualities) to show at the Theatre Robert Houdin, Paris.

Washington, D.C., 1897: Thomas Armat patents the Vitascope projector.

Coney Island, 1899: William "Billy" Bitzer, later Griffith's camerman, shoots the Jeffries-Sharkey fight for Biograph Studios, and the film is pirated by Vitagraph-Edison.

London, 1900: R. W. Paul, inventor of the Kinematograph camera, produces a 20-film series on *Army Life, or How Soldiers Are Made.*

West Orange, 1902: Edwin S. Porter produces *The Life of an American Fireman* for the Edison Company. Camera takes a closeup: a fire-alarm box.

Paris, 1902: Melies makes *A Trip to the Moon.*

West Orange, 1903: Porter directs *The Great Train Robbery* for the Edison Company; the first "Western" (actually made in New Jersey), and the first box-office hit.

Los Angeles, 1907: Col. William M. Selig establishes a movie studio in California.

FILM HISTORY SOURCES:

Balshofer, Fred J., and Miller, Arthur C. *One Reel a Week.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.

Ceram, C. W. *The Archaeology of the Cinema.* New York: Harcourt Brace and World, n.d.

Fielding, Raymond, ed. *A Technological History of Motion Picutres and Television.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.

Macgowan, Kenneth. *Behind the Screen; The History and Techniques of the Motion Picture.* New York: Delta Paperback, 1965.

Suggested Reading

Arlorio, Piero, et al. "Cinema as Gun; An interview with Fernando Solanas," in *Cineaste,* Vol. III, No. 2, Fall 1968.

Bonachea, Rolando E., and Valdes, Nelson P., eds. *Cuba in Revolution.* Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1972.

Bontemps, Jacques, et al. "Struggle on two fronts; a conversation with Jean-Luc Godard," in *Film Quarterly,* Vol. XXI, No. 2, Winter 1968-69.

Ciment, Michael. "Rocha," in *Second Wave,* edited by Ian Cameron. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1970.

Cinethique, "Fernando Solanas; an interview," in *Film Quarterly,* Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Fall 1970.

Clouzot, Claire. "Godard and the US," in *Sight and Sound,* Vol. 37, No. 3, Summer 1968.

Collet, Jean. *Jean-Luc Godard; An Investigation into his Films and Philosophy.* New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1970.

Cowie, Peter, ed. *A Concise History of the Cinema.* Vols. I and II. New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1971.

Crowdus, Gary, and Starr, William. "Cinema Novo vs. Cultural Colonialism; an interview with Glauber Rocha," in *Cineaste,* Vol. IV, No. 1, summer 1970.

Dawson, Jan. "Raising the Red Flag," in *Sight and Sound,* Vol. 39, No. 2, Spring 1970.

Fall, Bernard B. *The Two Vietnams; A Political and Military Analysis.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1967.

Fall, Bernard B., and Raskin, Marcus G., eds. *The Vietnam Reader.* New York: Vintage Books, 1967.

Getino, Octavio, and Solanas, Fernando. "Toward a Third Cinema," in *Cineaste,* Vol. IV, No. 3, Winter 1970-71.

Godard, Jean-Luc. "One or two things," in *Sight and Sound,* Vol. 36, No. 1, Winter 1966-67.

Haycock, Joel. "Notes on Solanas and Godard," Part I in *Film Society Review,* Vol. 7, No. 3, November 1971; Part II in Vol. 7, No. 4, December 1971.

Henderson, Brian. "Towards a non-bourgeois camera style," in *Film Quarterly,* Vol. XXIV, No. 2, Winter 1970-71.

Hibben, Nina. *Eastern Europe; An Illustrated Guide.* New York: A.S. Barnes & Co. Screen Series, 1969.

Hitchens, Gordon. "The way to make a future: Glauber Rocha," in *Film Quarterly,* Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Fall 1970.

MacBean, James Roy. "La Hora de los Hornos," in *Film Quarterly,* Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Fall 1970.

MacBean, James Roy. "See You at Mao," in *Film Quarterly,* Vol. XXIV, No. 2, Winter 1970-71.

MacBean, James Roy. "Vent d'Est, or Godard and Rocha at the crossroads," in *Sight and Sound,* Vol. 40, No. 3, Summer 1971.

Nascetti, Dina. "The courage of the people; an interview with Jorge Sanjines," in *Cineaste,* Vol. V, No. 2, Spring 1972.

Rosset, Barney, ed. *Film Festival: Grove Press International Film Festival Book.* New York: Grove Press Inc., n.d.

Sanjines, Jorge. "Cinema and revolution," in *Cineaste,* Vol. IV, No. 3, Winter 1970-71.

Wallington, Mike. "Antonio das Mortes," in *Sight and Sound,* Vol. 39, No. 4, Autumn 1970.

Other Film Study Guides Published by Grove Press

FILM COURSE STUDY GUIDES

RACISM

A carefully selected group of short and feature films that provide a realistic view of the substance and problems of racism. The course is designed to use these films as a meaningful bridge between the black and the white experience.

RADICAL VOICES

What is a radical film? Is it a film that deals with important social issues or a film that seeks a new form of expression? This course explores both questions using films that point to the need for change and also question many of our root assumptions and their means of expression.

Examination copies available on request:

GROVE PRESS FILM DIVISION
53 East 11 Street, New York, N.Y. 10003
Telephone: (212) 677-2400

TEACHING STUDY GUIDES

WAITING FOR GODOT
Samuel Beckett's complete play starring Zero Mostel and Burgess Meredith.
"One of the masterpieces of the century."—Clive Barnes, New York Times. 102 minutes.

PINTER PEOPLE
"Playwright Harold Pinter's work has never been so accessible or engagingly presented."—Variety.
58 minutes, color.

MANDABI
"Momentously beautiful . . . a comic, moving and universal story of modern Africa." — Newsweek.
90 minutes, color.

FINNEGAN'S WAKE
"A striking cinematic accomplishment . . . as challenging and witty as Joyce's prose." — Time.
97 minutes.

DARKNESS, DARKNESS
"The very best of the available films on heroin abuse."—Center for Mental Health. 37 minutes, color.

THE INDEPENDENT FILM
"For classroom use the greatest importance of the independent film is this: they excite their audience . . . Grove Press distributes this country's largest and most diverse library of independent cinema."—Sheldon Renan, Director, Pacific Film Archives.

Printed in U.S.A.

The Author

This film course outline was prepared by Margot Kernan, Associate Professor of Urban Media, at the Antioch College Washington-Baltimore campus. Mrs. Kernan has served as film consultant to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare; the U.S. Office of Education, the American Film Institute, the U.S. Civil Service Commission, the Federal Executives Institute; and has written for *Film Quarterly, The Washington Post, International Film Guide,* and other publications.

GROVE PRESS FILM DIVISION
53 East 11 Street, New York, N.Y. 10003
Telephone: (212) 677-2400